V

How Cities or Principalities Which Lived by Their Own Laws before They Were Occupied Should Be Administered

When those states that are acquired, as has been said, are accustomed to living by their own laws and in liberty, there are three modes for those who want to hold them: first, ruin them; second, go there to live personally; third, let them live by their laws, taking tribute from them and creating within them an oligarchical state which keeps them friendly to you. For since such a state has been created by that prince, it knows it cannot stand without his friendship and power, and it has to do everything to maintain him. And a city used to living free may be held more easily by means of its own citizens than in any other mode, if one wants to preserve it.

As examples there are the Spartans and the Romans. The Spartans held Athens and Thebes by creating oligarchical states there; yet they lost them again.[1] The Romans, in order to hold Capua, Carthage, and Numantia, destroyed them and did not lose them.[2] They wanted to hold Greece much as the Spartans had held it, by making it free and leaving it its own laws. But they did not succeed; so they were compelled to destroy many cities in that province so as to hold it. For in truth there is no secure mode to possess them other than to ruin them. And whoever becomes pa-

1. In Athens the regime of Thirty Tyrants was established by Spartan direction in 404 B.C., then overthrown in 403. In Thebes the victorious Spartans established an oligarchy in 382 B.C., which was overthrown by Pelopidas in 378.

2. Capua was destroyed by the Romans after its rebellion, in 211 B.C.; Carthage was destroyed in 146 B.C.; and Numantia in 133 B.C.

tron of a city accustomed to living free and does not destroy it, should expect to be destroyed by it; for it always has as a refuge in rebellion the name of liberty and its own ancient orders which are never forgotten either through length of time or because of benefits received. Whatever one does or provides for, unless the inhabitants are broken up or dispersed, they will not forget that name and those orders, and will immediately recur to them upon any accident as did Pisa after having been kept in servitude a hundred years by the Florentines.[3] But, when cities or provinces are used to living under a prince, and his bloodline is eliminated—since on the one hand they are used to obeying, and on the other they do not have the old prince—they will not agree to make one from among themselves and they do not know how to live free. So they are slower to take up arms, and a prince can gain them with greater ease and can secure himself against them. But in republics there is greater life, greater hatred, more desire for revenge; the memory of their ancient liberty does not and cannot let them rest, so that the most secure path is to eliminate them or live in them.

3. Pisa was acquired by Florence in 1405 and lost in 1494 because of the invasion of the king of France, Charles VIII.